

Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of Public Health
Emergency Medical Services Fact Sheet

EMS responds to all requests for pre-hospital medical care including cardiac, medical and trauma emergencies. These illnesses affect persons of all demographics. The survival rate for persons subject to a cardiac, medical or trauma emergency is greatly increased when responded to by a well trained and appropriately certified emergency medical technician.

Over 40% of the State is considered as either rural or in a professional health care shortage area. The State currently has only two Level 1 Trauma Centers located 300 miles apart. We should have a minimum of one Level 1 Trauma Center per one million populations, current population 4.6 million. EMS personnel must be at the highest level to ensure a greater survival rate secondary to prolonged transport times.

The Bureau of EMS is mandated to provide standards for education, examination and certification of emergency medical technicians.

- A reduction in funding would reduce the access to pre-hospital care impacting the rural areas of Louisiana dramatically.
- An increase in funding would improve the delivery of care and maximize the use of evolving technology leading to a decrease in morbidity and mortality.

Objective

Develop an adequate qualified medical workforce by mobilizing partnerships, developing policies and plans, enforcing laws and regulations, and assuring a competent workforce.

Performance Indicators

1. Convene and facilitate affiliations with EMS educators and programs.
2. Develop policy and procedures for examination and certification.
3. Formulate a conviction policy to address violations of regulations governing EMS personnel.
4. Provide standard, quality education, examination and certification.

Narrative

The Emergency Medical Services activity advances the state goal of better health by developing an adequate qualified medical workforce. The Louisiana Bureau of Emergency Medical Services is a section within the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health. The Bureau of EMS is

responsible for the improvement and regulation of emergency medical services in the State; it is mandated to promulgate and enforce rules, regulations, and minimum standards for course approval, instruction, examination and certification; it is responsible for developing a state plan for the prompt and efficient delivery of emergency medical services.

BEMS shall serve as the primary agency for participation in any federal program involving emergency medical services and may receive and, pursuant to legislative appropriation, disburse available federal funds to implement any service program.

The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program was mandated by statute secondary to increases of deaths due to sudden cardiac arrest. This program has remained unfunded since its implementation. Therefore, a reduction of funding would result in zero impact. However, an increase in funding would result in the successful implementation of the activity and the Bureau of EMS would promulgate all necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions.

The Emergency Medical Services-Children (EMS-C) program was mandated under the Department of Health and Hospitals, Emergency Medical Services in 1995 due to the lack of initial and continuing education programs for emergency medical services personnel that include training in the emergency care of infants and children.

The Bureau of EMS (BEMS) shall oversee medical transportation (emergency vehicles) as outlined in RS 40: 1235. This mandate is under the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, but shall be promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals.

Better Health

- **Education:** BEMS is tasked to ensure they are appropriately trained and follow course objectives as outlined by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Curriculum. Persons seeking instructor certification attend a course presented by BEMS. Upon completion, they are allowed to teach with minimal oversight. **Policy Development:** Persons applying to become an EMS educator are required to attend a nationally recognized EMS Educator Course and become affiliated with an approved program. This will create standardization of educators, and ensure that students receive consistent instruction.
- **Examination:** BEMS administers the National Registry Practical Examination to eligible candidates. BEMS has utilized an examination process consisting of uncertified examiners. BEMS utilizes a single practical examination site. **Policy Development:** BEMS will adhere to national recommendations by utilizing persons across multiple medical disciplines. These will include EMT's, Paramedics, Nurses and Physicians. BEMS will develop an Examiner Course to certify persons as State EMS Examiners. The course will utilize standard guidelines ensuring candidates receive an objective exam. The

Examiner's approved to proctor the practical examination. BEMS will expand the States' examination availability by increasing the number of EMS examination sites.

- Certification: BEMS is required to specify requirements and issue certifications and recertification's; specify continuing education requirements; and assure medical direction over emergency medical services. The EMS Certification Commission (EMSCC) recommends and approves requirements and standards of practice for EMS personnel and conducts disciplinary hearings and investigations. Policy Development: BEMS will participate in the implementation of the National Registry electronic certification system combining both National and State Certification. BEMS will adopt National Registry recertification guidelines. BEMS will approve all EMS continuing education hours. BEMS will create State minimal treatment guidelines. The EMSCC will evaluate and expand the current EMS standard of practice; and formulate a conviction policy.
- The BEMS is responsible for the improvement and regulation of emergency medical services in the State; it is mandated (RS 40:1231) to promulgate and enforce rules, regulations, and minimum standards for course approval, instruction, examination and certification; it is responsible for developing a state plan for the prompt and efficient delivery of emergency medical services.
- BEMS shall serve as the primary agency for participation in any federal program involving emergency medical services and may receive and, pursuant to legislative appropriation, disburse available federal funds to implement any service program (RS 40:123.1.C.).
- The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program was mandated by statute secondary to increases of deaths due to sudden cardiac arrest. The BEMS would promulgate all necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of RS 40:1236.
- The Emergency Medical Services-Children (EMS-C) program was mandated under the Department of Health and Hospitals, Emergency Medical Services in 1995. BEMS would promulgate all necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of RS 40:1300.104.
- BEMS shall oversee medical transportation (emergency vehicles) as outlined in RS 40:1235. This mandate is under the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, but shall be promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals.